

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19TH

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENT: **John 5-8 • "Head Knowledge vs. Heart Knowledge"**

SCRIPTURE John 5:31-40

OBSERVATION

Jesus is once again trying to get the Jewish leaders to understand who he really is – the long-awaited Messiah whose arrival the Scriptures have been promising since almost the very beginning of time. [Genesis 3:14-15]

The leaders don't believe him. Neither do they believe the testimonies about Jesus they've heard from others. Nor do they believe what they see with their own eyes. They have been studying diligently, believing that knowledge is the key to eternal life. Jesus tells them this is not true.

The Jewish leaders have the letter of the law down pat, and, according to Jesus, they still they do not have eternal life. He goes on to tell them that this is not his fault. He tells the leaders they do not have eternal life because they "refuse" to come to him. [v.40]

APPLICATION

How many exams did you pass in high school or college because you memorized a bunch of facts and dates long enough to regurgitate them on exam day? How many of those answers [or questions, for that matter] can you recall today?

Jesus tells us that to understand who he really is requires more than just studying – even studying diligently. James tells us "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." [James 1:22] James says this lack of action is like looking in a mirror, then walking away and forgetting what you look like.

I've often heard it said that many people miss the gospel by eighteen inches, which is about the length from one's head to one's heart. This is the case with the Jewish leaders to whom Jesus was speaking in this passage.

It takes more than just an influx of information to understand who Jesus really is. What can you do about this? If you know the word (i.e. the Bible), but don't know Jesus – really know him – begin to apply what you do understand thus far. As you serve Jesus by serving others [Matthew 25:40], as you love your neighbor as yourself [Matthew 22:39], as you continue to find ways to do the word, your head knowledge will seep into your heart and transform you from the inside.

Maybe there is a friend or neighbor on your mind. Give him a call. Do you know someone struggling financially? Take her a bag of groceries. Has the Lord done something amazing in your life recently? Tell a friend – especially a friend who may be struggling to understand Jesus. And ask – ask during your prayer time for wisdom and clarity. It will make all the difference.

PRAYER

Lord, help me see today beyond information I've read or heard. Lord, I want to know you in my heart, not just my head. I ask for wisdom and clarity as I continue growing in faith. As I look for a way to put what I know into action today, please show me who you are, bring your testimony to life for me in a clear and powerful way. *Amen.*

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